

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-19 (Canceled).

20. (Previously presented) Method for producing an easy-to-open overcapping cover comprising a head (5), a skirt (4) of a film or sheet material, an easy-to-open means provided on said skirt and including an upper line of weakness (43) and a lower line of weakness (44), wherein said lower line of weakness (44) is located on the cover at a height H that defines a partition of said cover with an upper part (10) and a lower part (11), the height being such that after said cover and said sealed bottle have been assembled said lower line of weakness (44) breaks when said cover is first opened to provide access to said cork once said upper part (10) has been removed, said lower part (11) remaining intact on the neck, wherein said upper line of weakness (43) is separated from the lower line of weakness (44) by a distance L at least equal to 0.5 H, wherein H is the height between the lower line of weakness (44) and the top end of said cover (1), upper (43) and lower (44) lines of weakness defining an opening strip 45, a gripping tab (46) disposed at a free end of said opening strip, said gripping tab (46) comprising notches (460, 461) disposed at upper and lower ends thereof and intended to direct the tearing of said opening strip (45) during said first opening such that when said bottle is opened for said first time said opening strip (45) by pulling on said gripping tab (46) and removing said upper part (10), wherein said method comprises:

- cutting out a blank of arc (6) of said skirt, said film or sheet material of height H',
- providing said lower line of weakness (44) and said notches (460, 461) on an axial

edge (60),

- providing an additional means being selected from an upper line of weakness (43), an upper reinforcement means (47, 48), a lower reinforcement means (67), a means (66) for fastening all or part of lower part (11) to the neck,
- applying a radial line of heat- or pressure-activated adhesive (63) on the other axial edge (61) of said arc, except on the matching part or opposite said tab (46),
- rolling said arc (6) on a chuck by folding axial edge (60) back onto the other axial edge (61), applying a line of adhesive between the two edges, or activating said pre-applied radial line of adhesive, to shape said skirt (4) by pressing edges (60, 61) together and possibly creating said grooves (9), and a head (5) is assembled or created by adding a part of the head and fastening it by thermobonding to upper rim (64) of said skirt that is possibly shrunk and folded.

21. (Previously presented) Method of claim 20 further comprising the steps of depositing an upper reinforcement or a lower reinforcement either by bonding a strip according to the mechanical characteristics required, which are resistance to tearing, and of a required shape, which is part of an annular sector, or by using a gun to apply a strip or ligne of melted plastic material that is adherent and that hardens when applied.

22. (Original) Method of claim 21, wherein said upper and lower reinforcement means are a self-adhesive label of suitable shape applied to said arc (6).

23. (New) Method for producing easy-to-open overcapping covers (1) for a bottle of sparkling wine (2) sealed with a cork (8) having a head (80), a metal cork wire (3) having a tightening wire (30) for fastening the cork to a neck of said bottle removably secured under a glass ring (20) of the neck of said bottle and further including an opening twist or loop (31), comprising:

a head (5), a skirt (4) of a film or sheet material,

an easy-to-open means provided on said skirt and including an upper line of weakness (43) and a lower line of weakness (44), said upper line of weakness (43) forming an additional means,

wherein said lower line of weakness (44) is located on the cover at a height H that defines a partition of said cover with an upper part (10) and a lower part (11), the height being such that after said cover and said sealed bottle have been assembled said lower line of weakness (44) breaks when said cover is first opened to provide access to said cork once said upper part (10) has been removed, said lower part (11) remaining intact on the neck,

wherein said upper line of weakness (43) is separated from the lower line weakness (44) by a distance L at least equal to $0.5 H$, wherein H is the height between the lower line of weakness (44) and the top end of said cover (1),

upper (43) and lower (44) lines of weakness defining an opening strip 45 having a width L, and wherein said upper line of weakness and said lower line of weakness are substantially parallel and substantially extend around the whole circumference of the cover,

a gripping tab (46) disposed at a free end of said opening strip,

said gripping tab (46) comprising notches (460, 461) disposed at upper and lower ends thereof and intended to direct the tearing of said opening strip (45) during said first opening such that when said bottle is opened for said first time said opening strip (45) by pulling on said gripping tab (46) and removing said upper part (10) along, said method comprising the steps of:

- cutting out a blank of arc (6) of said skirt said film or sheet material of height H',
- providing said lower line of weakness (44) and said notches (460, 461) on an axial edge (60),
- applying a radial line of heat- or pressure-activated adhesive (63) on the other axial edge (61) of said arc, except on the matching part or opposite said tab (46),
- rolling said arc (6) on a chuck by folding axial edge (60) back onto the other axial edge (61), applying a line of adhesive between the two edges, or activating said pre-applied radial line of adhesive, to shape said skirt (4) by pressing edges (60, 61) together and possibly creating said grooves (9), and a head (5) is assembled or created by adding a part of the head and fastening it by thermobonding to upper rim (64) of said skirt that is possibly shrunk and folded.

24. (New) Method of claim 23, further comprising the steps of providing an additional means being selected from an upper reinforcement means (47, 48), a lower reinforcement means (67), a means (66) for fastening all or part of lower part (11) to the neck, and

depositing an upper reinforcement or a lower reinforcement either by bonding

a strip according to the mechanical characteristics required, which are resistant to tearing, and of a required shape, which is part of an annular sector, or by using a gun to apply a strip or line of melted plastic material that is adherent and that hardens when applied.

25. (New) Method of claim 24, wherein said upper and lower reinforcement means are a self-adhesive label of suitable shape applied to said arc (6).

26. (New) Method of claim 23, wherein said gripping tab (46) is positioned according to a generating line of said cone and is located between two lines of weakness (43, 44) and fastened to said opening strip (45), said gripping tab (46) using said notches (460, 461) to automatically direct the tearing strain when said cover is opened towards said two lines of weakness (43, 44) such that said cover is opened easily, ensuring the remaining lower part 11 of the cover located beneath said lower line (44) stays intact and said cork wire 3, if fitted, is freed.

27. (New) Method of claim 23, wherein said gripping tab (46) comprises notches or recesses (460,461) made in said film or sheet material constituting said cover.

28. (New) Method of claim 23, wherein width L_1 of said tab (46) ranges from $0.5 L$ to L with L ranging between 1.5 and 4 cm.

29. (New) Method of claim 23, wherein said lower part (11, 65) comprises a lower reinforcement (67) means that increases the mechanical properties of said lower part (11) and adheres to an inner surface of said lower part (11, 65) at least along and parallel to said lower line of weakness (44), said lower reinforcement (67) further comprises an adhesive layer over a surface that can be activated and that is intended to adhere to said neck.

30. (New) Method of claim 29, wherein the entire said lower reinforcement (67) comprises a layer that can be activated and constitutes a circular strip (68) the width of which is at least equal to 5 mm and that can extend over all or part of the height of said lower part (11) and that is adjacent to at least the upper edge of said lower part (11) along and parallel to said lower line of weakness (44).

31. (New) Method of claim 29, wherein all or part of the inner surface of said lower part (11) comprises a layer of glue or adhesive as fastening means that can be activated and that constitutes a bonded part 66 that adheres to said neck, typically after it has been activated.

32. (New) Method of claim 31, wherein said glue or adhesive comprises a complex layer consisting of a layer that adheres to the glass and a layer that adheres to the material comprising the inner surface of said cover, typically aluminum, paper or a layer of plastic material or varnish.

33. (New) Method of claim 23, wherein said upper part comprises an upper reinforcement means (47) selected, particularly in terms of type and position on the inner surface of said upper part, to increase the mechanical properties of said upper part such that when said bottle is opened for said first time said opening strip (45), which is created by pulling on gripping tab (46), removes the whole of said upper part (10) along with it and to enable said upper line of weakness (43) to be removed by said upper reinforcement means.

34. (New) Method of claim 33, wherein said upper reinforcement means (47) comprises a lateral end (472) that reinforces all or part of said gripping tab (46).

35. (New) Method of claim 34, wherein said lateral end (472) extends beyond said gripping tab such that said lateral end (472) assumes the role of said gripping tab when the cover is first opened.

36. (New) Method of claim 33, wherein said upper reinforcement means (47) comprises a reinforcement strip or line that includes a lower part or edge (471) adjacent to lower line of weakness (44).

37. (New) Method of claim 36, wherein said reinforcement means (47) comprises an upper part or edge (470) along the same reinforcement strip, said upper (470) and lower edges (471) being separated by a width L, that is constant or otherwise depending on angular position α , width L ranging typically between 0.4

and 4 cm, average width L being preferably between 0.3 and 0.7 times H, H being the height between the lower line and the upper end or top of said cover (1).

38. (New) Method of claim 37, wherein width L is not constant and increases, typically regularly, with the angular position α , width L being at its smallest at said tab (46) where angle α is equal to 0.

39. (New) Method of claim 33, wherein said upper reinforcement means (47) covers the entire interior surface or inner periphery of the free part of said opening strip (45).

40. (New) Method of claim 33, wherein said upper (47) or lower (67) reinforcement means consist either of a thin sheet or reinforcement strip, typically of a plastic material (preferably PET or PP), paper, or a layer, strip or line of plastic, resin, varnish or paint material.

41. (New) Method of claim 23 wherein, said cover material is selected from a group consisting of Al, Al alloys, Sn, Sn alloys, shrinkable plastic, Al/PO/Al complex multilayers, Al/PO/paper, PO/Al/PO, and charged PO/Al/PO, wherein Al refers to a layer of aluminum, PO a layer of polyolefin (preferably PE) capable of containing a charge that is typically mineral.

42. (New) Method of claim 41 wherein, the thickness of said material in

sheets or strips may range between 25 and 50 μm when the material is aluminum or an alloy, between 110 and 150 μm when the material is tin or an alloy, between 60 and 100 μm when the material is a shrinkable plastic film and between 60 and 110 μm when the material is a complex multilayer material, typically Al/PO/Al.

43. (New) An easy-to-open overcapping cover (1) for a bottle of sparkling wine (2) sealed with a cork (8) having a head (80), a metal cork wire (3) having a tightening wire (30) for fastening the cork to a neck of said bottle removably secured under a glass ring (20) of the neck of said bottle and further including an opening twist or loop (31), comprising:

a head (5), a skirt (4) of a film or sheet material,

an easy-to-open means provided on said skirt and including an upper line of weakness (43) and a lower line of weakness (44)

wherein said lower line of weakness (44) is located on the cover at a height H that defines a partition of said cover with an upper part (10) and a lower part (11), the height being such that after said cover and said sealed bottle have been assembled said lower line of weakness (44) breaks when said cover is first opened to provide access to said cork once said upper part (10) has been removed, said lower part (11) remaining intact on the neck,

wherein said upper line of weakness (43) is separated from the lower line weakness (44) by a distance L at least equal to 0.5 H, wherein H is the height between the lower line of weakness (44) and the top end of said cover (1),

upper (43) and lower (44) lines of weakness defining an opening strip 45

having a width L, and wherein said upper line of weakness and said lower line of weakness are substantially parallel and substantially extend around the whole circumference of the cover,

a gripping tab (46) disposed at a free end of said opening strip,

said gripping tab (46) comprising notches (460, 461) disposed at upper and lower ends thereof and intended to direct the tearing of said opening strip (45) during said first opening such that when said bottle is opened for said first time said opening strip (45) by pulling on said gripping tab (46) and removing said upper part (10) along,

said cover comprising a lower reinforcement means (67) or an upper reinforcement means (47).

44. (New) Cover of claim 43, further comprising means for fastening said lower part (11) to said neck, and means for reinforcing said upper part (10) so that when said bottle is opened, said upper part (10) is removed wholly.

45. (New) Cover of claim 43, wherein gripping tab (46) is positioned according to a generating line of said cone and is located between two lines of weakness (43, 44) and fastened to said opening strip (45), said tab (46) using said notches (460, 461) to automatically direct the tearing strain when said cover is opened towards said two lines of weakness (43, 44) such that said cover is opened easily, ensuring the remaining lower part 11 of the cover located beneath said lower line (44) stays intact and said cork wire 3, if fitted, is freed.

46. (New) Cover of claim 43, wherein said gripping tab (46) further comprises notches or recesses (460,461) made in said film or sheet material constituting said cover.

47. (New) Cover of claim 43, wherein width L_1 of said tab (46) ranges from 0.5 L to L with L ranging between 1.5 and 4 cm.

48. (New) Cover of claim 43, wherein said lower part (11, 65) comprises said lower reinforcement (67) means that increases the mechanical properties of said lower part (11) and adheres to an inner surface of said lower part (11, 65) at least along and parallel to said lower line of weakness (44), said lower reinforcement means (67) further comprises an adhesive layer over a surface that can be activated and that is intended to adhere to said neck.

49. (New) Cover of claim 48, wherein the entire said lower reinforcement (67) comprises a layer that can be activated and constitutes a circular strip (68) the width of which is at least equal to 5 mm and that can extend over all or part of the height of said lower part (11) and that is adjacent to at least the upper edge of said lower part (11) along and parallel to said lower line of weakness (44).

50. (New) Cover of claim 48, wherein all or part of the inner surface of said lower part (11) comprises a layer of glue or adhesive as fastening means that can be activated and that constitutes a bonded part 66 that adheres to said neck,

typically after it has been activated.

51. (New) Cover of claim 50, wherein said glue or adhesive comprises a complex layer consisting of a layer that adheres to the glass and a layer that adheres to the material comprising the inner surface of said cover, typically aluminum, paper or a layer of plastic material or varnish.

52. (New) Cover of claim 43, wherein said upper part comprises said upper reinforcement means (47) selected, particularly in terms of type and position on the inner surface of said upper part, to increase the mechanical properties of said upper part such that when said bottle is opened for said first time said opening strip (45), which is created by pulling on gripping tab (46), removes the whole of said upper part (10) along with it and to enable said upper line of weakness (43) to be removed by said upper reinforcement means.

53. (New) Cover of claim 52, wherein said upper reinforcement means (47) comprise a lateral end (472) that reinforces all or part of said gripping tab (46).

54. (New) Cover of claim 53, wherein said lateral end (472) extends beyond said gripping tab such that said lateral end (472) assumes the role of said gripping tab when the cover is first opened.

55. (New) Cover of claim 52, wherein said upper reinforcement means (47)

comprise a reinforcement strip or line that includes a lower part or edge (471) adjacent to lower line of weakness (44).

56. (New) Cover of claim 55, wherein said reinforcement means (47) comprise an upper part or edge (470) along the same reinforcement strip, said upper (470) and lower edges (471) being separated by a width L, that is constant or otherwise depending on angular position α , width L ranging typically between 0.4 and 4 cm, average width L being preferably between 0.3 and 0.7 times H, H being the height between the lower line and the upper end or top of said cover (1).

57. (New) Cover of claim 56, wherein said width L is not constant and increases, typically regularly, with the angular position α , width L being at its smallest at said tab (46) where angle α is equal to 0.

58. (New) Cover of claim 52, wherein said upper reinforcement means (47) cover the entire interior surface or inner periphery of the free part of said opening strip (45).

59. (New) Cover of claim 52, wherein said upper (47) or lower (67) reinforcement means consist either of a thin sheet or reinforcement strip, typically of a plastic material (preferably PET or PP), paper, or a layer, strip or line of plastic, resin, varnish or paint material.

60. (New) Cover of claim 43, wherein said cover material is selected from a group consisting of Al, Al alloys, Sn, Sn alloys, shrinkable plastic, Al/PO/Al complex multilayers, Al/PO/paper, PO/Al/PO, and charged PO/Al/PO, wherein Al refers to a layer of aluminum, PO a layer of polyolefin (preferably PE) capable of containing a charge that is typically mineral.

61. (New) Cover of claim 60, wherein the thickness of said material in sheets or strips may range between 25 and 50 μm when the material is aluminum or an alloy, between 110 and 150 μm when the material is tin or an alloy, between 60 and 100 μm when the material is a shrinkable plastic film and between 60 and 110 μm when the material is a complex multilayer material, typically Al/PO/Al.